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Dear Boris Johnson

There is a Climate Consensus - now we need urgent action

The UK is about to host make or break climate talks. There is overwhelming evidence of the need to act now and a growing consensus for action, as the recent national Great Big Green Week showed. This issue is now mainstream. In September, Demos published a report concluding that the UK public is united in support of a climate policy package that could exceed the government's existing target for reducing emissions – but that it requires speedy government action. Yet we hear of disagreements with the Treasury over spending on the green recovery, even though the Stern review told us back in 2006 that delaying action makes no economic sense and it will cost much more. We urgently need our government and you as Prime Minister to show leadership as COP 26 approaches.

The Climate Coalition's Great Big Green Week in Eynsham demonstrated the breadth and strength of feeling and the range of people and skills already taking on the challenge at local level. It was a collaboration between local community groups, businesses, individuals, families and friends and mobilised 200 people to put on over 60 events and activities over the week. The community of Eynsham and beyond (an estimated 2000 people) came together to show and celebrate ways of tackling climate change and protecting the environment to realise the many benefits of a greener future. We set out to inspire locals and strengthen the resolve of our politicians to do better in the lead up to COP 26. The expertise and vision of the community showed what is possible right now.

There was something for everyone. We kicked off with local farmer Robert Crocker's passionate rallying cry, "Farmer Spare The Hedge" performed by Farmer Crocker himself with accompaniment from Eynsham Community Choir and Eynsham Morris, followed by a rousing speech about the things we can all do to help combat climate change by local businessman and parish councillor, Ross Macken. There were also lively performances from Eynsham Morris and The Horns of Plenty, we gave away plant-based food made from surplus allotment vegetables, held a repair café, craft events, litter picking, and nature yoga sessions. Children were inspired by the Low Carbon Hub's giant grid game, Big Green Day Out competition and 20 science activities from the Eynsham Curiosity Box. Winners of the school holiday competition are helping plan a schools COP26 summit for Eynsham Partnership Academy. An eco trail around the village showcased local green initiatives, gardens, allotments and art installations. We visited a solar farm under construction, heard about the innovative plans for smart and fair green energy around Eynsham, learned about Eynsham's thriving nature recovery network, swift project and hedgehog highways and bathed in nature at the Peace Oak orchard. There was a real buzz around the village at events like the electric vehicle day and the highly competitive mini formula E races. A survey found encouraging interest in car clubs and car sharing which helps reduce the number of cars- and saves resources, carbon emissions and costs.

On a more reflective note, we held a talk tent chaired by Rain Newton-Smith, Chief Economist at the CBI, and a stellar cast of speakers of all ages offering inspiration and insights on the climate and ecological emergency, green building, the future of energy. Residents shared personal experiences of actions to help the planet, among them car sharing and living car free. Highlights included teenager Lara Hynes, who spoke movingly about her worries for her future and the lack of action and Eynsham's Market Garden who promote waste-free local food.

We were amazed at the dedication shown in putting the event on, the response from the community and were inspired by the level of concern about climate change shown during the week. A number of people publicly pledged to make personal changes in their life and life styles and some even acted there and then.

Our event was part of a national pattern that saw over 5000 events uniting people across the country. An even greater response is planned for *the Global Day of Action for Climate Justice* on November 6th including a march in Oxford.

We know what needs to be done and how to do it, but are held back by inadequate national policy. For instance in Eynsham and beyond we are frustrated by the resistance to building new homes to zero carbon standards, the slow progress in upgrading existing homes and in the shift towards active travel and away from road transport. We also have world leading experts working with us to accelerate the energy transition, but all this needs the support of policy and regulation. Now we need our leaders to lead, to take note of all this energy on the ground and redouble its COP 26 efforts.

As the Demos report states: 'the public has spoken and it's time for the government to act.' We urge you and your colleagues to support urgent action and show global leadership at this critical time.

Yours sincerely,

The Eynsham Great Big Green Week Team

Includes Sarah Couch, Lucy Dickinson, Ros Kent, Laura Stringer, Sue Raikes, Angie Titchen and many others

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Photographs below to give you a taste of Great Big Green Week in Eynsham

More information

<https://eynsham-pc.gov.uk/org.aspx?n=The-Great-Big-Green-Week>

<https://greatbiggreenweek.com/>

<https://greenweekoxon.co.uk/>

Demos, The Climate Consensus The Public's Views on How To Cut Emissions: Results From The Climate Calculator September 2021

<https://demos.co.uk/project/the-climate-consensus-the-publics-views-on-how-to-cut-emissions/>



Eynsham's Great Big Green Week launches with a rousing talk from Parish Councillor Ross Macken and music from Farmer Robert Crocker, community choir, Eynsham Morris and the fabulous Horns of Plenty in the sunny square at Eynsham



Left: 100 plant based lunches were given away
Above: Families enjoying the great big grid game, based on the future of smart local energy trading



Learning about electric cars, bikes and vehicle charging coming soon to Eynsham car park



A full programme of stimulating talks in the square chaired by Rain Newton-Smith



Mini formula E kits ecoracers from Eynsham's Curiosity Box and sponsored by the Faraday Institution – the Wolverines winning team



Winners of the school holiday competition 'A Great Big Green Day Out'
The winners are helping plan a schools COP26 Summit for Eynsham Partnership Academy



Great Big Green Week pledges in Eynsham's square

